

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed July 7, 2003, claims 1-12, 17-22, 27, 30, 35-40 and 44-58 have been cancelled and claims 13-16, 23, 24, 31-34, 41, 59-70 and 72-77 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 13-16, 23-26, 28, 29, 31-34, 41-43 and 59-77 are active in this application, of which claims 13, 23, 31, 33, 34, 41 and 59 are independent.

The Office Action indicates that claims 13-16, 23-26, 29, 31-34, 41-43 and 59-77 are allowed, and claim 28 would be allowable if presented in independent form.

Entry of the Amendments and Remarks is respectfully requested because entry of Amendment places the present application in condition for allowance, or in the alternative, better form for appeal. No new matters are believed to be added by these Amendments.

Based on the above Amendments and the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the outstanding objections and rejections and they be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

In the Office Action, claim 59 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed. In this response, claim 59 has been amended to replace "the fast" with -- the first--. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection over claim 59 be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action, claims 1, 4-12, 17-22, 27, 30, 35-40 and 44-51 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 5,473,455 issued to Koike,

et al. ("Koike") in view of U. S. Patent No. 5,608,556 issued to Koma ("Koma"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In this response, claims 1, 4-12, 17-22, 27, 30, 35-40 and 44-51 have been cancelled. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully solicited.

In the Office Action, claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koike in view of Koma and further in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,141,074 issued to Bos, *et al.* ("Bos"). This assertion is respectfully traversed.

In this response, claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 52-58 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U. S. Patent No. 6,407,794 to Koma ("Koma 2") in view of Japanese Patent Publication No. 7-311383 to Tokuo ("Tokuo"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In this response, claims 52-58 have been cancelled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Other Matters

In this response, claims 13-16, 23, 24, 31-34, 41, 59-70 and 72-77 have been amended for informality correction, clarification and better wording. This amendment is not made for the purpose of avoiding prior art or narrowing the claimed invention since those claims are all allowed. Therefore Applicants do not intend to relinquish any subject matter by these amendments.

Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance

While applicants agree with the Examiner's determination that the inventions recited in the claims are patentable over the references of record, applicants object to the reasons for allowance (hereinafter "RFA"). Applicants respectfully submit that each of the claims in this application define separate inventions, which recite different combinations of features, and the basis for the patentability of each claim is based upon the totality of the features recited in each claim. Moreover, while Applicants believe that the claims are allowable, applicants do not acquiesce that patentability resides in each feature exactly as expressed in the claims, nor that each feature is required for patentability of each claim.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, claims 13-16, 23-26, 28, 29, 31-34, 41-43 and 59-77 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: September 24, 2003

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